

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

PETERS, Johann Anton de

Köln 1725–1795

One of Greuze's best pupils, the German Anton de Peters (Jean-Antoine de Péters, Peeters) came to Paris around 1745 and was ennobled in 1763. In 1756 he married the daughter of a former *avocat aux conseils du roi*, Jean Gouel de Villebrune, each side bringing a dowry of 10,000 livres; he was then described as *peintre ordinaire du prince Charles de Lorraine*. (The same title is used when he attended the funeral of the young painter Pierre-Charles Mettay (1728–1759) at Saint-Roch, 30.III.1759, and again when he rented a house in Paris in 1761.) Some sources suggest that Élisabeth Gouel de Villebrune was herself a miniaturist; her sister Marianne, Mme du Noblet (*q.v. s.v. Villebrune*) was a pastellist. Peters became a member of the Académie de Saint-Luc in 1756 (rue du Hazard), exhibiting there in 1762. After its dissolution in 1776, together with the painter Antoine de Marcenay de Ghuy he organised exhibitions at the *Colisée* which were quickly suppressed. In the *Almanach des peintres* of 1776 he is described as “*Peintre du roi de Danemark, peint supérieurement la miniature*”, and he is also listed among the private collectors as having an excellent collection of paintings, drawings and prints, including a fine painting by Rembrandt. A sale took place in Paris (Remy, Basan, 9.III.1779 & seq.); this included two Boucher pastels. De Peters again described himself as *peintre du prince Charles de Lorraine, rue du Hazard-Richelieu*, in his submission to the 1779 Salon de la Correspondance (where he continued to exhibit until 1787). In 1789 he altered this to “*peintre de S.M. le roi de Danemark*”. A law student called Champelle published an acrostic celebrating the name of Peters in the *Année littéraire* of 27.III.1787.

Most of his work seems to be in watercolour, chalk or miniature. A group of a dozen studies in Köln, mainly of female heads, executed with touches of pastel, are not reproduced here; nor are other *trois crayons* drawings which have been described as pastels. A print entitled *L'Amour maternelle*, engraved by Chevillet after a wash drawing by Peters, is erroneously said to depict the dauphin Louis-Joseph (1781–1789) at the breast of his wet-nurse Mme Poitrine but probably predates his birth. The subject matter is closely related to a drawing with pastel of a couple with an infant. The ages of the sitters make it unlikely that this is the artist, his wife and one of their four known children, of whom only one is subsequently recorded: Anne Elisabeth Philippine (c.1769–1809), who married Louis Moreau Lislet in 1789.

Monographic exhibitions

Peters 1971: *Anton de Peters. Ein Kölner Maler des Rokoko*, Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 1971

Peters 1981: *Johann Anton de Peters. Ein Kölner Maler des 18. Jahrhunderts in Paris*, Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 1981

Bibliography

AN MC ET/LXXV/667, 14.IV.1761 [baïl de maison]; Bellier de La Chavignerie & Auvray; Bénézit; Chatelus 1991, pp. 156f, 219; G.

Czymmeck, H. Robels & B. Vogelsang, *Johann Anton Peters, ein Kölner Maler des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Köln. 1981; Darmstadt 1914; Fortlage 1910; Guichard 2008; Herluisson 1873, *s.v. Mettay*; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; May 1942; Ratouis de Limay 1946; Réau 1922; Sanchez 2004; Voreaux 1998

Pastels

J.5836.101 AUTO PORTRAIT; & pendant: J.5836.102 épouse (∞ 1756), née Marie-Élisabeth Gouel de Villebrune (p.1738–1785) en habit de bal, pstl, 44x35 (Paris, Couturier-de Nicolaÿ, 13.XII.1995, Lot 23/24 repr., est. fr25–30,000/20–25,000, €38,000/30,000. Köln, Lempertz, 17.XI.2001, Lot 1109 repr.) Φ



J.5836.105 Garçon, pstl, cr./ppr, 22.1x15.8 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z. 447). Lit.: May 1942, repr. Φ



J.5836.107 Buste d'un beau vieillard à longue barbe, tête chauve, pstl, 24.3x37.9 (du Charreaux & al.; Paris, Remy, 2.V.1791 & seq., Lot 322, b/i)

J.5836.108 Buste d'un beau vieillard à longue barbe, pstl, 48.7x37.9 (du Charreaux & al.; Paris, Remy, 2.V.1791 & seq., Lot 323, withdrawn)

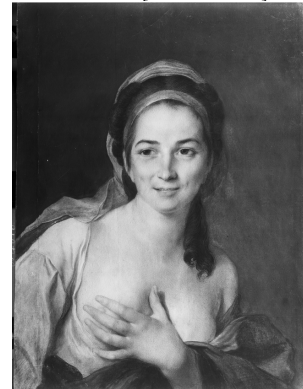
J.5836.109 Buste d'homme, pstl (du Charreaux & al.; Paris, Remy, 2.V.1791 & seq., Lot 324, withdrawn)

J.5836.11 Tête de vestale, pstl, 48.6x40.5, Salon de la Correspondance, .V.1779

J.5836.111 Tête d'expression représentant une vestale, pstl, Salon de la Correspondance, .II.1783

J.5836.112 Buste de vestale, pstl, 48.7x40.6 (Paris, Paillet, 8.V.1789 & seq., Lot 8)

J.5836.113 Lady in blue and white drapery, pstl, 63.5x47, s Peters (Sir Theodore Hope & al.; London, Christie's, 13.VI.1927, Lot 2). Attr. M. W. Peters [?]; new attr., ?] Φα



Jeune femme jouant de la harpe (Monaco, Sotheby's, 22.II.1986, Lot 22 repr., attr., *inconnue*), v. Guérin, Mme de Genlis

J.5836.116 *Après le bain*, pstl, 55x44.5, ov. (London, Sotheby's, 11.XII.2002, Lot 156 repr., attr., est. £2–3000) [attr.] Φα



Photo courtesy Sotheby's

J.5836.119 ~version, pstl, 52x43 ov. (Bergerac, Hôtel des ventes du Périgord, 26.VII.2008, repr., Éc. fr. XVIII^e, est. €700–800) Φα



J.5836.121 ~[?]pendant, Jeune femme surprise au moment d'entrer dans sa baignoire, pstl, 54.5x44.5 ov. (Paris, Drouot, Rabourdin, Choppin de Janvry, 14.vi.2002, Lot 61 repr., Éc. fr., est. €2300–2500) [apparently pendant; ?attr. Peters] φα

J.5836.123 Ehepaar mit Kind, pstl/ppr, 63x49 (Professor Adolf von Jordans, Morenhoven)

Drawings heightened with pastel

J.5836.125 Jeune cavalier, pstl, cr./ppr, 20.2x16.1 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 450)

J.5836.126 Man, half-length profile to left, trois cr./ppr, 29.9x23 (Nicolas Schwed, cat. 2011, no. 16 repr.)

J.5836.127 Tête de jeune femme, pstl/ppr, 22.3x16.6 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 441). Lit.: Brieger 1921, repr. p. 262

J.5836.128 Tête de femme, pstl/ppr, 22.4x16.6 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 442)

J.5836.129 Dame mit aufgestütztem Arm, pstl/ppr gr., 30.2x22.9 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 443)

J.5836.13 Tête de jeune femme, pstl/ppr, 22.4x16.4 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 444)

J.5836.131 Dame avec livre, pstl, mine de plomb et aquarelle/ppr, 30.8x22.8 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 445)

J.5836.132 Jeune femme, pstl, cr./ppr bl.-gr., 27x21.7 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 446)

J.5836.133 Jeune femme assise sur un canapé, pstl, cr./ppr bl., 29.9x23.2 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 482)

J.5836.134 Tête de jeune femme, pstl, cr./ppr, 36.2x27.7 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 487)

J.5836.135 Tête de jeune femme, pstl, cr./ppr, 20.8x16.9 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 1075)

J.5836.136 Dame, pstl, cr./ppr, 18.3x14.4 (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. Z 1076)

J.5836.137 Mother and father playing with their child, watercolour, gch., pstl, black chlk/ppr, 62.5x48.2, Salon de la Correspondance 1779, 1782 (London, Sotheby's, 3.vii.1996, Lot 148 repr., est. £6–8000). Exh.: Peters 1971; Frankfurt 1989, no. 2.10 repr.; Köln 1995, no. 208, clr pl. CXVII φ



~cop. Johann Wilhelm Caris, pnt. (Köln, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum)

J.5836.14 Dame parée richement: elle est en pied, assise dans un fauteuil, et tenant de sa main droite un livre sur ses genoux; son bras gauche est posé sur une table de toilette: sur cette table et par terre, on voit un tambour à un ouvrage, une basse de viole, des livres, des papiers de musique, &c., gch., 48.7x37.9 (du Charreaux & al.; Paris, Remy, 2.v.1791 & seq., Lot 318)

J.5836.141 Femme cauchoise, aussi assise, tenant sur elle un enfant endormi, gch., 48.7x37.9 (du Charreaux & al.; Paris, Remy, 2.v.1791 & seq., Lot 318)